

161—9.16 (216) Consequences of failure to make discovery.

9.16(1) Motion for order compelling discovery. The commission, upon reasonable notice to the party from whom discovery was sought and all persons affected thereby, may move for an order compelling discovery as follows:

a. Appropriate officer. A motion to compel discovery shall be made to the presiding officer for discovery.

b. Motion. If a deponent fails to answer a question propounded or submitted under rule 161—9.17(216), or a corporation or other entity fails to make a designation under subrule 9.18(5), or a party fails to answer an interrogatory submitted under rule 161—9.9(216), or if a party, in response to a request for inspection submitted under rule 161—9.12(216), fails to respond that inspection will be permitted as requested or fails to permit inspection as requested, the commission may move for an order compelling an answer, a designation, or an inspection in accordance with the request. When taking a deposition on oral examination, the commission may complete or adjourn the examination before moving for an order.

Any order granting a motion made under this rule shall include a statement that a failure to comply with the order may result in the imposition of sanctions pursuant to rule 161—9.16(216).

In ruling on such motion, the presiding officer for discovery may make such protective order as the presiding officer for discovery would have been empowered to make on a motion pursuant to subrule 161—9.8(1).

c. Evasive or incomplete answer. For purposes of this subrule an evasive or incomplete answer is to be treated as a failure to answer.

d. Award of expenses of motion. If the motion is granted, the presiding officer for discovery shall, after opportunity for hearing, require the party or deponent whose conduct necessitated the motion or the party or attorney advising such conduct or both of them to pay to the commission the reasonable expenses incurred in obtaining the order, including attorneys' fees, unless the presiding officer for discovery finds that the opposition to the motion was substantially justified or that other circumstances make an award of expenses unjust.

If the motion is denied, the presiding officer for discovery shall, after opportunity for hearing, require the commission to pay to the party or deponent who opposed the motion the reasonable expenses incurred in opposing the motion, including attorneys' fees, unless the presiding officer for discovery finds that the making of the motion was substantially justified or that other circumstances make an award of expenses unjust.

If the motion is granted in part and denied in part, the presiding officer for discovery may apportion in a just manner the reasonable expenses incurred in relation to the motion.

e. Notice to party. If the motion is granted, the presiding officer for discovery shall mail or cause to have mailed a copy of the order to counsel and to the party or parties whose conduct, individually or by counsel, necessitated the motion.

9.16(2) Failure to comply with order.

a. Sanctions by court in district where deposition is taken. If a deponent fails to be sworn or to answer a question after being directed to do so by the presiding officer for discovery, the office of the attorney general may petition for enforcement of that order in the judicial district in which the deposition is being taken. Failure by the deponent to obey an order of enforcement from the district court may be considered a contempt of that court.

b. Sanctions by the presiding officer for discovery. If a party or an officer, director, or managing agent of a party or a person designated under subrule 9.18(5) to testify on behalf of a party fails to obey an order to provide or permit discovery, including an order made under 9.16(1) or under rule 161—9.14(216), the presiding officer for discovery may make such orders in regard to the failure as are just, and among others, the following:

(1) An order that the matters regarding which the order was made or any other designated facts shall be taken to be established for the purposes of any action or proceeding relating to the subject matter of the investigation in accordance with the claim of the party opposing the position of the disobedient party;

(2) An order refusing to allow the disobedient party to support or oppose designated claims or defenses, or prohibiting such party from introducing designated matters in evidence in any action or proceeding relating to the subject matter of the investigation;

(3) An order striking out pleadings or parts thereof, or staying further proceedings until the order is obeyed, or dismissing the action or proceeding or any part thereof, or rendering a judgment by default against the disobedient party;

(4) In lieu of any of the foregoing orders or in addition thereto, the presiding officer for discovery shall require the disobedient party or the attorney advising such party or both to pay the reasonable expenses, including attorneys' fees, caused by the failure, unless the presiding officer for discovery finds that the failure was substantially justified or that other circumstances make an award of expenses unjust.

c. Enforcement petition. In addition to any of the alternatives of paragraph "b" above, the office of the attorney general may petition for enforcement of the order compelling discovery in the appropriate judicial district. Failure by a party to obey an order of enforcement from the district court may be considered a contempt of that court.

9.16(3) Expenses on failure to admit. If a party fails to admit the genuineness of any document or the truth of any matter as requested under rule 161—9.10(216), and if the commission thereafter proves the genuineness of the document or the truth of the matter, the commission may move for an order requiring the party to pay the reasonable expenses incurred in making that proof, including reasonable attorneys' fees. The presiding officer for discovery shall make the order unless the presiding officer for discovery finds that:

- a. The request was held objectionable pursuant to rule 161—9.10(216),
- b. The admission sought was of no substantial importance,
- c. The party failing to admit had reasonable ground to believe that the party might prevail on the matter, or
- d. There was other good reason for the failure to admit.

9.16(4) Failure of party to attend at own deposition or serve answers to interrogatories or respond to request for inspection. If a party or an officer, director, or managing agent of a party or a person designated under subrule 9.18(5) to testify on behalf of a party fails to appear before the officer who is to take the person's deposition, after being served with a proper notice; or to serve answers or objections to interrogatories submitted under rule 161—9.9(216), after proper service of the interrogatories; or to serve a written response to a request for inspection submitted under rule 161—9.12(216), after proper service of the request, the presiding officer for discovery on motion of the commission may make such orders in regard to the failure as are just, and among others it may take any action authorized under 9.16(2) "b"(1) to (4).

The failure to act described in this subrule may not be excused on the ground that the discovery sought is objectionable unless the party failing to act has applied for a protective order as provided by rule 161—9.8(216).

9.16(5) Motions relating to discovery. No motion relating to depositions or discovery shall be filed or considered by the presiding officer for discovery unless the motion alleges that the movant has made a good-faith but unsuccessful attempt to resolve the issues raised by the motion with counsel for the party or entity whom the motion concerns without intervention of the presiding officer for discovery.